DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 474 987 EA 032 422

AUTHOR	Foskett, Nick
TITLE	Marketing.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	19p.; In: The Principles and Practice of Educational Management; see EA 032 295.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	*Cultural Context; *Educational Administration; Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; Free Enterprise System; Governance; Higher Education; *Marketing; *Models

ABSTRACT

This document is a chapter in "The Principles and Practice of Educational Management," which aims to provide a systematic and analytical introduction to the study of educational management. The structure of the book reflects the main substantive areas of educational leadership and management, and most of the major themes are covered in the volume's 19 chapters, of which this is one. A distinctive meta-trend in educational management is the movement of schools from an inward-focused and closed mode of operation to one that is externally focused, accountable, competitive, and open. This chapter examines the role that marketing plays in this shift. Markets and marketing are miasmic concepts, but at its most basic level, a market exists where choice exists. From an international perspective, a full range of market forms can be identified, each generating distinctive marketing and external-relations management issues. In the developed world, for example, marketing has had more of an impact on educational management than it has had in less-developed countries. Whatever the degree of marketization, though, schools and colleges must engage in the processes of marketing to some extent. No matter the setting, the idea that marketing is simply about selling is challenged by a number of important ideas that relate strongly to educational management: the marketing triad, a recognition that marketing has goals other than recruiting students; the distinction between transactional relationships and other relationships, and the importance of partnerships and alliances in education management; and the notion of relationship marketing. Because effective external-relations management is based on the integration of a market-focused perspective into strategy development, it is essential that all these ideas be incorporated into a plan. (Contains 48 references.) (RJM)

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2002

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Marketing

Nick Foskett

Decentralisation, accountability and marketisation

One of the most distinctive meta-trends in educational management is the movement of schools and colleges from an inward-focused, protected and closed mode of operation to one which is externally focused, accountable, increasingly competitive and open. This change from a 'domesticated' to a 'wild' operating environment (Carlson, 1975) has seen a shift away from a paternalistic relationship between government (central or local) and institutions, and from a protectionist monastic relationship between schools and their local communities, although the extent and form of its development varies between, and sometimes within, different national settings. With a growing engagement with the world beyond the school/college gates, institutions have had to rise to the challenge of managing their external relations. This has brought them into the world of communication management, public relations and marketing to varying extents, areas that have been *terra incognita* for most teachers and managers in education.

The pressures towards such external engagement are a direct result of the processes of globalisation as the global market economy, communication technologies and the international adoption of many common cultural values have impacted both on governments and educators. Three broad pressures can be identified. First, the desire to prepare young people to engage with the global economy and technology has pushed schools and colleges to engage with that external world. Second, to compete internationally, governments have sought to raise the quality and quantity of the 'output' from education. The pursuit of the three 'E's of efficiency, effectiveness and economy has led some to establish quasi-market systems for components of their education system (Whitty et al., 1998). Third, libertarian views of the rights of individuals in society have promoted stronger links between schools and their environments. The right to choose education and training pathways is enshrined in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while the growth of consumerism, the rise of vocationalism and its requirement for engagement with the labour market, and the egalitarian and economic pressures towards widening

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participation in education, all require the positive management of external relations by schools and colleges. Marketisation, therefore, is a global phenomenon, but the pressures to engage in activities that fall under the umbrella term of 'marketing' have arisen not simply from the need for institutions to sell education as a consumer product and to compete with other schools and colleges for the allocation of scarce resources. The momentum is at least as much the result of a developing perspective on the nature, purpose and role of education within society. Market accountability, political accountability and social accountability all serve to push schools and colleges in the direction of external relations management.

Marketisation produces a range of management implications for schools and colleges. Of most immediate impact is decentralisation, the movement to some form of self-management with responsibility to some degree for acquiring resources and making choices about priorities for their use. With this responsibility comes accountability for the impact of those resources, both in terms of financial probity and for the effect on pupil/student learning. The view that freeing schools and colleges to manage their own resources will enable them to respond to local conditions to raise standards more effectively than through centralised controls underpins the drive towards markets (e.g. Chubb and Moe, 1990). However, Lauder and Hughes (1999) and Thrupp (1999), focusing on New Zealand, and Gorard and Fitz (2000) and Gibson and Asthana (2000), considering the UK environment, question how far schools can actually ultimately influence standards when the role of school mix effects and socio-economic segregation is such an important factor in pupil achievement. Thrupp (1999), in particular, warns of the rise of the 'politics of blame' in which: 'schools which "lose" . . . are seen as those whose teachers and principals have not been able to improve enough to boost their reputation and hence the size of their student intakes' (ibid.: 7).

The management implications of this are that schools must focus on external scrutiny of their performance and achievement. As a result, responsiveness to changing educational and social environments, the primacy of teaching quality and quality assurance systems, and the management of communication within and beyond the institution have become key priorities. Importantly, though, with this changing focus comes a shift in the culture of schools and colleges and their management organisation. Clarke and Newman (1992), for example, identified the rise of 'new managerialism' with its emphasis on individual performance, and management based in the culture of the market rather than of education. Gewirtz et al. (1995) describe the shift from 'comprehensive values' to 'market values', and the changing nature of headship with an enhanced emphasis on entrepreneurialism and 'bilingualism' (talking the languages of business and education).

Educational markets and marketing

'Markets' and 'marketing' are miasmic concepts, permeated by value-laden perspectives. Both have multiple meanings, and many of the debates about the acceptability of markets and marketing in education have been built on assumptions about the implicit value positions of those promoting or questioning their introduction. The ethical and operational issues this raises for those researching management in educational markets have been explored by Foskett (2000).

A market exists where choice exists and individuals or organisations can choose between products or services. While some form of 'exchange' normally takes place (e.g. payment for the service), this exchange may be direct between provider and supplier or by some indirect resource allocation mechanism (e.g. government provides funding for each student recruited). In education the choosers (the 'demand side') may be parents, young people, employers, government, public or private sector organisations, 'for-profit' or 'not-for-profit' organisations, or schools and colleges themselves. Depending on the service or product, any of these may also be the 'supply side' of the market. For example, schools and colleges may be the demand side in purchasing services from a local education authority (e.g. advisory services) or a commercial supplier (e.g. cleaning services), or in recruiting staff, but are the supply side in recruiting pupils, bidding for central government funding for new initiatives or designing courses to meet the needs of local employers.

Many writers (e.g. Woods et al., 1998) discuss the importance of recognising that markets are highly varied in form and nature, and the concept of the 'micro-market' is an important one. Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (2001: 17) emphasise that 'markets are dynamic and individual, defined as much by local geography and history as by the over-riding principles of the economics of supply and demand', while Gorard (1997) stresses that markets change over time, their form and structure being dynamic. Reading off market outcomes from one situation to another is, therefore, extremely difficult. This suggests that institutions must recognise that the precise form and shape of the markets *they* operate in will be unique, and that understanding their own market is an essential first step to effective management of any external relations.

From an international perspective there exists a full range of market forms, each generating distinctive 'marketing and external relations' management issues for education managers. Broadly speaking, we can identify a spectrum from highly centralised systems where such management tasks are almost proscribed to strongly marketised systems. In Namibia, for example, substantial secondary school restructuring and reorganisation (Auala, 1998) has retained strong central government control and no notion of marketisation. In Tanzania, a similar organisational model has been in operation, with most

elements of the education system traditionally centrally directed and controlled (Babyegyega, 2000). Following guidance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), however, a National Task Force on Education (1993) recommended that decentralisation should be implemented, with school districts and schools taking most responsibility for finance, resources and curriculum and seeking to engage the community in the life of the schools. The aim is not to establish a 'market' for pupils in terms of school choice, but to seek to promote increased participation in education across all age ranges in a context of declining pupil enrolment. Central to this task is the enhancement of quality in schools, with a key strategy for schools to: 'guarantee instructional hours through supervision and curriculum reform . . . making school committees and headteachers watchdogs in regulating teachers' behaviour, especially the problem of absenteeism' (Babyegyega, 2000: 5). Similar models are beginning to emerge elsewhere in developing countries (e.g. in Malawi (Nsaliwa and Ratsoy, 1998)), but the notions of competition and market accountability are still in their infancy in many countries.

It is in the countries of the developed world where marketisation has had rather more impact on educational management, although even here it is by no means uniform or universal. In Israel (Goldring, 1991; 1997) a range of market forms exists in relation to secondary schools. In Tel Aviv, parental choice of school is operated, and schools must compete for pupils. In other cities such as Jerusalem a much more prescriptive allocation model of school places is applied. Such partial marketisation is in contrast to the strong commitment to choice, delegated management responsibility, and competition that has been introduced in New Zealand and in England and Wales. In New Zealand (Lauder and Hughes, 1999; Thrupp 1999; Waslander and Thrupp, 1997) parental choice has been placed at the heart of the secondary school system, leading to the establishment of clear 'circuits of schooling' (Ball et al., 1995) and to the polarisation of schools. Lauder and Hughes (1999) have shown how schools have adopted management strategies to engage with the market. Those schools serving areas of higher socio-economic status (ses) have been successful in attracting better motivated pupils, while those from lower ses areas or from distinctive ethnically defined localities have struggled to compete. For schools at the bottom of the league, operating in the market is very difficult for, as Lauder and Hughes (1999: 109) show for one such school 'all the marketing in the world has not helped Kea College'.

In England and Wales the school marketplace has many contradictions in that schools are expected to compete for pupils, but are highly constrained by the imposition of a centrally imposed curriculum, a rigid inspection system and the promotion of tightly defined performance indicators which limit the opportunities for schools to differentiate themselves. Furthermore, the existence of a strong independent school sector and the release of some schools

from standard pupil selection mechanisms means that the nature of the market place is highly varied at the micro-level (Foskett and Hemsley-Brown, 2001). A strong commitment to school markets in the early 1990s through the introduction of local management of schools (LMS) and parental choice, has been eroded more recently by pressure towards greater collaboration amongst schools and colleges, attempts at rationalisation of provision and a retreat from 'parental choice' to 'parental preference'. Nevertheless, quasi-markets are alive and well in the education system of England and Wales.

Whatever the form or degree of marketisation, though, schools and colleges must engage in the processes of marketing to some extent. The multiple meanings of 'marketing' incorporate some concepts that are 'alien' to traditional views of education and others that are implicit within most education value systems. Marketing may be seen as an operational process, involving, for example, promotional, sales and public relations activities. Alternatively, it may be regarded as an holistic approach to the management of an organisation which encompasses its mission, strategies and operations, and in which the whole ethos and purpose of the organisation is focused on the needs and wants of its clients, partners, stakeholders and customers. Negative conceptions of marketing in education are linked to the idea of 'selling', with a view that parents and young people may be persuaded to take up a particular education or training experience because it is in the interests of the provider that they do so and not necessarily in the interests of the customer or client. However, if marketing is seen as striving to meet the needs of those customers or clients then the true notion of 'service' that is implicit in many educationists' view of their role is clearly present. The idea that marketing involves 'knowing the customer and their needs so well that selling becomes superfluous' (Drucker, 1973: 15) incorporates notions of partnership and relationships which are quite at home in most educational philosophies.

The idea that marketing is simply about 'selling' is challenged by a number of important ideas that relate strongly to educational management – the marketing triad, a recognition that marketing has goals other than recruiting students; the distinction between transactional relationships and other relationships and the importance of partnerships and alliances in education management; and the notion of 'relationship marketing'. These ideas are examined below.

The marketing triad

For many schools and colleges marketing does not have pupil/student recruitment as its only or even its major aim. Where education is compulsory and catchment areas largely fixed, or where a school or college is oversubscribed, little of the effort of external relations management needs to be directed to immediate recruitment. More of the effort will need to be directed to the

management of the quality of the educational provision and to the relationships with and responsiveness to partners, stakeholders and the community. The marketing triad model (Foskett, 1995) (Figure 15.1) captures the notion of these multiple aims, and shows how under different circumstances marketing effort may be applied in different directions. Overall, this model is suggesting that marketing is about meeting the organisation's needs (for survival and success), but that those needs in themselves involve meeting the needs and wants of society for high standards of education and training provision. Marketing as 'selling' is a basic survivalist notion and is a relatively unnecessary concept in an effective school or college providing high standards of education and training.

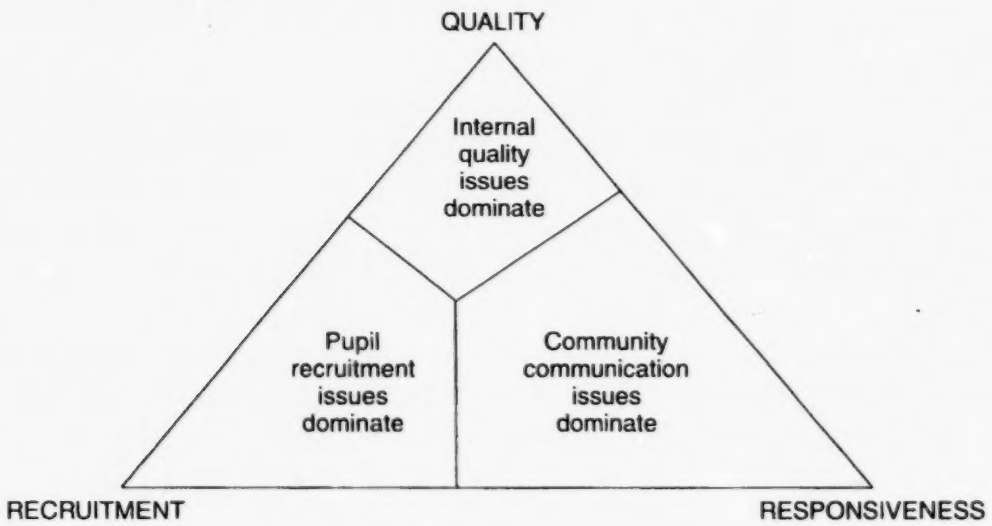

Figure 15.1: The marketing triad model

Transactional relationships, partnerships and alliances

Many of the external relationships which schools and colleges need to manage are not straightforward exchange, transactional relationships. Many involve the development of alliances, allegiances and partnerships in support of shared goals (Foskett 1999; Hall, 1999). Choosing 'partners' may initially be a transactional relationship, for example in persuading a parent to choose the school for their child, or in choosing a business partner for a joint funding bid. More frequently, though, such partners are predetermined, in that a local education authority or district school board may provide advisory services such as psychology or careers support. Once established, though, the relationship is one of working with partners to achieve the identified outcome, and the proactive management of such external relationships is a key continuous task for most educational managers.

Relationship marketing

The concept of relationship marketing has emerged from the commercial business world (Gronroos, 1997) in recognition that for many small businesses in markets of limited spatial extent success is based on the development of a relationship which goes far beyond the sale of the service or product. Goodwill, 'word of mouth' promotion, innovation in 'product or service development', and responsiveness to customer needs with high levels of service are the essence of the relationship. Managing the relationship, with its emphasis on the interpersonal, on responsiveness and on quality assurance, is the essence of relationship marketing, not promotion, advertising and selling. Such activities may be necessary on entering a new market, on seeking expansion, or in re-establishing an organisation whose reputation has declined, but otherwise may be relatively minor areas of effort. Most schools and colleges are clearly small businesses with a defined geographical area to serve, and for them relationship marketing would seem to be a much more appropriate strategy.

'Marketing' is an umbrella term for the management of a wide and dynamic range of external relationships for schools and colleges. The implications of 'selling' within the term, though, mean that a better phrase for this sphere of activity is external relations management, for this can incorporate promotion management, partnership management and relationship management. Even here, though, we must be careful with the conceptualisations, for external relations management has many components which are distinctly internal processes. The establishment of communications systems, internally and externally, the focus on quality assurance within the education and training activities, and the promotion of a client-focused ethos within the school or college (so-called 'internal marketing') are as much a part of external relations management as market research, prospectus publication and seeking out service providers. Internal marketing is linked closely to issues of cultural change in organisations, which are explored later in this chapter.

Strategy, marketing and management

Integrating external relations/marketing into a school or college's strategy and practice is more than a process of 'bolting on' some additional activities. Gray (1991), Hanson and Henry (1992) and Kotler and Fox (1995) all stress how effective external relations management is based on the integration of a market-focused perspective into strategy development. Hanson and Henry, for example, distinguish between 'strategic marketing', where all aspects of an organisation's vision and strategy are linked to 'market analysis', and 'project marketing' which involves undertaking specific activities (often promotional or public relations activities) in response to emerging needs. Gray supports this notion but suggests that both will be present for most organisations. He

suggests that strategic planning in schools and colleges should comprise three distinctive elements which link to marketing:

- an institutional plan identifying mission, and medium- and long-term goals, which are based in a clear understanding of the organisation's stakeholders and their needs and wants
- thematic plans linking strategy to operational practice for example, curriculum, estates and buildings, each of which identifies how this activity supports the market-driven aims of the institutional plan
- an operational marketing plan, which draws together the marketing elements of the institutional and thematic plans to ensure a coherent and efficiently operated external relations/marketing activity. One element of this will be the mechanisms in place to identify emerging external relations issues and to be responsive to them. This is the 'project marketing' component of the whole strategic marketing process.

Such a model of planning reinforces the ideas of Johnson and Scholes (1993), who suggest that strategic management comprises three components – strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation.

Strategic analysis involves scanning and sensing the operational environment within which the institution operates to identify:

- aspects of its operations for future development. The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC, 1997) describe this as anticipatory evidence, indicating the directions that policy and practice in the institution should be going
- how far current provision and operation is meeting external needs and wants. FEFC term this confirmatory evidence.

In the commercial sector these activities would be identified as the processes of 'marketing research', and for most businesses would be the responsibility of a dedicated marketing team. In public sector organisations it is only the largest colleges which use significant resources for these activities. The development of marketing departments in many larger colleges has led to a more substantial formal evidence-base for decision-making. The availability, for example, of labour market information through regional organisations such as the Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) and the commissioning of bespoke market research are more common than in the past (e.g. Waring, 1999), and sector-specific guidance on such processes is available (e.g. FEFC/NAO, 1998). However, as Foskett suggests:

> Using the data to influence strategy . . . is difficult because of a lack of formal systems to feed data into the planning process, a lack of experience in inter-

> preting and analysing such information, and the slow responsiveness of colleges who are locked into timescales of years rather than the shorter timescales of market change. (Foskett, 1998a: 55)

In contrast, most schools rely on the informal information that arises from day-to-day interaction with stakeholders and clients, with few using explicit planned marketing research (Glatter et al., 1997). The reading of policy documents, engagement with the professional arenas of education and the formation of excellent relationships with the local community provide the mechanics of this process. The use of small-scale research to canvas parental or community views on issues provides some strength to the interpretations schools make from other informal sources, but resource constraints mean that active marketing research is not possible. We may argue, too, that it is largely unnecessary, for there is no evidence that schools which do such market research make better strategic decisions than those which do not. This reinforces the belief that relationship marketing is the key to successful external relations management for most schools and colleges.

Strategic choice involves identifying the broad directions and aims that the institution will pursue. Foskett (1999) identifies three elements of strategic choice in relation to the marketing and external relations management activity of a school or college.

1 Target market strategy is the selection of market segments in which the institution will operate. Kotler (1991) has identified three broad market strategies – undifferentiated strategies, in which the school or college seeks to meet the needs of all consumers in all segments; differentiated strategies which involve selecting areas and activities to specialise in; and concentrated strategies in which a single market segment is chosen for focus. Within the school sector in the UK there has been only a limited pursuit of differentiation, for the sense of schools serving their local community is very strong. In post-compulsory education there is more evidence of differentiation, and there is a clear policy direction from government that this is seen as a key way of ensuring high-quality provision for education and training in the sector (DfEE, 2000).
2 Competitive positioning strategy involves identifying the distinctive features of the institution that distinguish it from its competitors in the same market segments. A school may seek to distinguish its faith affiliation, or its single-sex nature. A college may emphasise its distinctive facilities for particular provision (e.g. electronic music laboratories), or its strong pastoral system.
3 Marketing mix strategy is identifying the elements which will be emphasised in the promotional messages of the institution. Traditionally this has been defined in commercial marketing by the 4Ps model (Product, Place,

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Price and Promotion), but this has been extended in the service sector to 7Ps by the inclusion of Process, People and Physical Facilities (Kotler and Fox, 1995):

(a) Product – the education/training experience that is being offered.
(b) Place – the location of that provision (e.g. in college, or by distance learning).
(c) Price – the direct, indirect or opportunity costs of the education/training experience.
(d) Promotion – the promotional strategies to be used (e.g. prospectus, advertising, word of mouth).
(e) Process – the manner and style of the education/training experience (e.g. teaching styles, study skills support).
(f) People – the staff at all levels within the school or college.
(g) Physical facilities – the teaching and social facilities and the learning facilities in the school or college.

Strategic implementation is the final element of strategic planning (Johnson and Scholes, 1993), and involves operationalising and then evaluating the strategy. Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (1999) suggest that communication is a key component of implementation, and distinguish between sales communications (e.g. advertising) and relationship communications. Strong within this explicit management of communications with external constituencies has been a concern to demonstrate the key values and aims that the organisation has. Commercial organisations have long had a concern for institutional identity that is reflected in the idea of branding, which is the association of complex but positive images into the name, symbol or logo of an organisation. It is the public representation of product identity, which in the case of most service sector organisations, is almost synonymous with institutional identity.

The importance of branding, image and perception in engaging with the external environment is emphasised in the view that 'purchasing' any good or service, including education, is in fact 'symbolic consumption', or the purchasing of the social values and status that go with that service or product. Values and status are intimately linked to image and perception and Farrell (2001: 173) suggests that 'the marketer has to exploit aspects of the educational institution which have a symbolic significance for the potential clients', which is the principal function of branding and image.

Schools and colleges, while mostly eschewing the idea of 'brand' associated with famous products or commercial organisations, still seek to convey a positive encapsulating image through their publications, their symbols/signs, and their activities (Foskett and Hemsley-Brown, 1999). Olins describes institutional identity in the following way:

> In order to be effective every organisation needs a clear sense of purpose that people within it understand. They also need a strong sense of belonging. Purpose and belonging are the two facets of identity. Every organisation is unique, and its identity must spring from the organisation's own roots, its personality, its strengths and weaknesses . . . The identity of the organisation must be so clear that it becomes the yardstick against which its products, behaviour and actions are measured. This means that the identity cannot simply be a slogan, a collection of phrases; it must be visible, tangible and all-embracing. (Olins, 1989: 7)

Institutional identity, therefore, is the image the institution would like to have and to present to its various internal and external audiences. Its development is part and product of the process of developing a strategy for operating in the market(s) the school or college has.

The models of strategic marketing presented here are rarely to be found explicitly in schools, although they can be identified implicitly within school development plans and school promotional materials. Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (1999) show how the marketing mix can be identified in the management processes of Grove Primary School and Greenstreet Community School and also in the explicit mission and development aims of each school. Within the research of Ball et al. (1995) and Maguire et al. (2001) the choice of both target market strategy and competitive positioning strategy is clear in the policies and practices of their case study schools. Most emphasise comprehensive ideals, but still promote the specific specialisms that they have. Similarly, Foskett (1995) shows how Castle School, an 11–16 mixed comprehensive school in central southern England, promotes its distinctiveness in terms of excellence in languages, its strong discipline framework and its strengths in working with more able pupils, while neighbouring Downsview School emphasises its achievements across the ability range, despite its excellence in science and mathematics. In the schools within Lauder and Hughes's study in New Zealand, differentiation by the schools in terms of target markets and competitive positioning can be easily read off, with schools such as Kea College, for example, seeking to raise their attractiveness to a much broader socio-economic range of parents than their 'natural' catchment contains. What all these examples have in common, though, is a very limited explicit commitment to a marketing perspective but a strong implicit recognition of the canons of good marketing in both the strategising and operationalising of external relations management.

In colleges the presence of marketing strategy is much higher profile. Davies (1999) and Foskett (2002) show that colleges have explicitly addressed marketing in their strategic planning and in the establishment of marketing systems and marketing plans. Lowlands College (Foskett and Hemsley-Brown, 1999) has, for example, a section on marketing within its strategic plan, which demonstrates its choice to focus on engineering and to develop its vocational

and business-funded training rather than its academic track provision. The limited success of this strategy reflects the product-driven nature of the strategy and the limited use of marketing research or the development of a culture of responsiveness in the college. Foskett (2002) shows that this is a common feature of marketing strategies in further education colleges.

The significant difference between schools and colleges lies not in their use of marketing strategy, therefore, but in their recognition that this is what they are doing, and in the specific marketing systems they establish. This is partly a function of size, for colleges clearly have much greater resources to apply to marketing, but also lies in the more constrained nature of the markets within which most schools operate, both geographically and in terms of diversity.

Marketing, inclusion and widening participation

A key trend in global education has been the increase in participation rates, particularly within the post-compulsory sector of education. Widening participation is in essence a marketing issue for education managers, for the challenge is to raise participation and achievement amongst socio-economic and community groups hitherto under-represented in the sectors. The drive to widen participation is partly driven by the pursuit of increased economic competitiveness, but is also based on a concern for equity and facilitating individual achievement. The second of these is also the main driver behind the inclusion movement in compulsory education, through which there is a drive to integrate into school those who may have been excluded from mainstream education as a result of special educational needs. Both widening participation and inclusion raise important marketing issues.

Widening participation has two distinct components. First, facilitating choice involves the removal of systemic barriers to participation for those who wish to engage in learning but are prevented from doing so. Simplifying admissions procedures, providing alternative modes of programme delivery (e.g. distance or open learning), providing child-care facilities or tailoring pastoral support systems to meet individual needs are some of the 'marketing' approaches that can facilitate choice. Much more challenging is the second component, that of increasing demand for education and training. This requires the changing of perceptions amongst those who are outside education and training about the nature, purpose and, most importantly, value of education and training. It requires the personal benefits of learning to be emphasised. As such it requires the collaboration of the whole education system. As Foskett and Hemsley-Brown suggest:

> breaking through the challenge of increasing demand in post-compulsory education requires a fundamental re-appraisal of how the perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of young people and their parents can be modified by changing the types

> of experiences they have and the messages they receive both from within the education/training system and from society as a whole. (Foskett and Hemsley-Brown, 2001: 25)

What is clear is that increasing demand is not simply about selling education. As Woodrow (1998) demonstrates, it requires a wide range of strategies which take education to potential new participants, tailoring programmes and systems to meet *their* needs rather than the needs of institutions. Widening participation requires institutions and their staff to modify their culture and sometimes their values, and provides a good example of marketing acting as a catalyst to cultural change. Foskett (2002) shows how this is still comparatively undeveloped within further education colleges in southern England, where widening participation is seen in terms of being a marketing challenge rather than a project in managing cultural change within the institution.

Inclusion provides a distinctive marketing conundrum for schools and colleges. At the level of the promotion of equity as an important social value it is clear that promoting inclusion is a positive virtue. Schools and colleges are perceived as of high social and moral standing within the community if they are successful with special needs children. However, for most parents there is a moral dilemma between supporting community good and pursuing educational benefit for their own child, and schools which have a record of strong special needs support or inclusion, while attractive to those parents with such children, may find that they decline in popularity with other parents. In defining the distinctive character of the school, therefore, many senior managers must strike a balance between these contradictory pressures, as Gewirtz et al. (1995), and Maguire et al. (2001) have shown in the case of Northwark Park School.

Marketing, responsiveness and cultural change

Central to the development of marketing in education has been the importance of developing responsiveness. Responsiveness is 'the ability of an institution to sense and serve the changing needs of its relevant environment' (Michael et al., 1994: 54), and requires both inputs of knowledge about the wants and needs of all parts of that environment and mechanisms for enabling this information to bring about changes in the way the organisation works. Responsiveness is more than just an operational process, however, for it is a part of the mosaic of culture and ethos. As a bolt-on process it is not capable of providing sensitive, subtle and continuing mutual communication with the world outside the school or college. Achieving responsiveness, therefore, is also about achieving cultural change in institutions, and about embedding in staff at all levels a commitment to adopt the key mores of responsiveness – scanning the external environment for indicators of change; implementing effective quality assurance processes; developing a willingness to change; and

developing an outlook which is focused on clients (pupils, parents, community etc.) rather than subject, school or self. Lumby (1999) suggests that fundamentally this is about changing the balance of power and authority in relationships between teachers and schools, on the one hand, and parents, pupils, government etc. on the other. Traditional relationships placed the power and authority and the privilege of 'knowing best' and 'being right' with the school and the teacher. Responsiveness, however, requires that authority to be shared, not to an uncritical stance in which only the voice of the client is heard, but to one in which the school/college and the communities it serves are equal partners. Responsiveness is about a move from a culture of professional responsibility to one of market and/or political accountability.

Promoting such cultural change can be a long process. Research during the 1990s in the UK showed little evidence of the strong adoption of responsiveness either in schools (Foskett, 1998b; Woods et al., 1998) or in further education (Smith et al., 1995). The initial phases of marketisation appeared to have generated responses in schools that made them less responsive rather than more, retreating into professional experience and knowledge to decide what they could best 'sell' to potential customers, rather than becoming more open and responsive. More recently, however, there is emerging some evidence of cultural change towards responsiveness. Ainley and Bailey (1997) see some recognition in the further education sector that teachers and institutions are genuinely more responsive to student needs, although Foskett (2002) shows how that responsiveness still resides largely in the minds of senior managers rather than in the actions of most teaching staff and middle managers. Maguire et al. (2001: 48) suggest from their case study of Northwark Park School that there is evidence of cultural adjustment in the school and that 'the language of the market-place [is] . . . being gradually incorporated into the everyday language and practices of the school'. This they see as the outcome of a process of cultural adaptation and change in which 'the conduct of schools, and individual teachers within the market might best be understood as resolutions to the "comprehensive/market" dilemma' (Maguire et al., 2001: 46). This process of change has not been an explicit aim of the school, however, and has developed dynamically in response to the school's operation in the changing external environment and the adoption of language and practice from management activities and professional interaction. It is, rather, the outcome of individual decisions and actions within and outside the school which have led to a significant and quite rapid cultural change.

Conclusion

The rise of marketing in education has challenged educational managers to meet the challenge of reorienting schools and colleges to be focused on the outside world. Despite the global scale of the trend, though, it is clear that

there is considerable variability in the market forms emerging, the interpretations of marketing that are being made by managers and hence the pattern of the new education system that is arising. Even in those economies where marketisation has been most strongly planted, schools and colleges have rarely adopted an approach which might be described as strategic marketing. More frequently the development has been in the form of project marketing and a slow migration towards adopting, quite unknowingly, the canons of relationship marketing where quality and community relations and responsiveness are at the heart of the strategy for external relations management.

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